

Dear Member,

Newsletter No. 12 contains summaries of the talks given at the one-day programme of the SIG at the Royal College of Psychiatrists on 2nd May, 'Minds within Minds – the case for spirit release therapy'. We are grateful to the speakers, Dr. Haraldur Erlendsson, Dr. Alan Sanderson, Dr. Martin Israel and Canon Beaumont Stevenson for providing texts of their talks for this Newsletter. This meeting attracted the largest number yet to come to one of our one-day programmes - the house was full, with 55 members and guests attending.

We feel it is important that the SIG casts its net wide. Aside from whether Spirit Release Therapy should be regarded simply as a psychological treatment, or as dealing directly with energies yet unknown, such a powerful therapeutic tool needs handling with great care. And since the therapy is increasingly available outside of the Health Service, psychiatrists had best know about it. Do read the contributions and see for yourself what you think.

We are approaching the annual college meeting in July and this will be the moment for me to step down as chair, having served my four years in office. The SIG has been a challenging and exciting development and it seems only yesterday that we began. I am delighted that Professor Andrew Sims is going to be our next chair. Andrew has been a stalwart member of our steering group from the outset. Indeed, as long ago as 1993, in his presidential valedictory lecture to the college, Andrew eloquently argued the case for spirituality to be integrated within psychiatry.

Apart from our programme of talks in Edinburgh on the afternoon of Thursday July 3rd, we shall be holding an open business meeting in the morning between 10.45 and 12.00. We do hope that as many as possible will be able to join us, to help us think ahead to further developments we would wish to see for the SIG.

With best wishes,
Andrew Powell (chair)